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CLAIMS

- 1.\ Dispensing device of portable terminals for acquiring product data in a shopping centre, comprising:
- λ plurality of static cradles for a corresponding plural ty of portable terminals adapted to be withdrawn and used by the customers of a shopping centre for acquiring product data;
 - means for identifying each customer enabled to the use of the portable terminals;
- means for communicating to each identified customer a 10 terminal to be withdrawn for carrying out the product data acquisition;
 - a data control and processing unit adapted to control the above identification and communication means of/to the customer and to process the product data acquired through said terminals;

characterised in that said plurality of cradles, said identification and communication means of/to the customer and said control unit are housed into a single container,

- and in that said plurality of cradles is housed into a 20 substantially flat portion\ of said container provided in close proximity of the customer identification means so as to allow them to immediately and easily access to said plurality of terminals.
- Dispensing device according to claim 1, wherein said 25 terminal housing portion is substantially horizontal.
 - 3. Dispensing device according to claim 1 $-\infty$, wherein said terminal housing portion comprises a box-shaped body including a plurality of compartments constituting said plurality of terminal cradles.
 - Dispensing device according to claim 3, wherein each compartment of said plurality of compartments is adapted to house a terminal of said plurality δt terminals and comprises locking/unlocking means of the \terminal housed therein.

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Dispensing device according to claim 3 -or-4, wherein said box-shaped body comprises first electrical connectors adapted to co-operate with second electrical connectors provided on the terminals.

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- claim 3 Dispensing device according to any one of claims from 3 to 5, wherein each compartment of said plurality of compartment's comprises:
- a first \upper aperture for inserting the terminal, wherein a vertical axis and a terminal insertion axis inclined by a\ predetermined angle with respect to the vertical axis and defined;
- a second lower service aperture below the first aperture for insexting the terminal;
- guiding means of the terminal into the compartment.
- Dispensing device according to claim 6, wherein said 15 second aperture has a\size larger than that of said first aperture.

Dispensing device according to claim 6 $\frac{1}{2}$, wherein compartment of said plurality of compartments comprises a terminal support element arranged outside the 20 projection of the first aperture along the vertical axis.

Dispensing device according to claim 8, wherein said terminal support element comprises opposed guiding walls inclined by said predetermined angle with respect to said vertical axis, and wherein one of\said walls comprises a support step for a lower end of the terminal, arranged outside the projection of the first aperture along the vertical axis.

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- 10. Dispensing device according to any one of claims from 6 to 9, wherein said box-shaped body comprises a covering a surface provided with a plurality of hole's at said first terminal insertion apertures.
- a 11. Dispensing device according to any one of -claims, wherein said container comprises means for moving a

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claim

12. Dispensing device according to any one of the previous elaims wherein the customer identification means comprises at least any one of the following means: a magnetic card reader, a smart card reader, a bar-code card reader, an optical receiver, a radio or mobile phone receiver, a fingerprint reader, a fingerprint or retina detector, a device for entering a numerical code, a voice detector.

claim

13. Dispensing device according to any one of the previous claims, wherein the means for communicating to identified customers the terminals to be withdrawn comprises at least any one of the following means: visual communication means on a display or monitor, visual communication means in the proximity of each cradle of said plurality of cradles, sound or voice communication means, terminal lifting means provided into each cradle of said plurality of cradles.

claimi

14. Dispensing device according to any one of claims from 1 to 13, wherein the communication means to the identified customers of the terminals to be withdrawn provide marketing and/or promotional information and/or discount vouchers.

claim 1

15. Dispensing device according to any one of the previous claims, also comprising data transmission and/or reception means to and from optical and/or radio-type terminals.

25 16. Dispensing device according to any one of the previous claims, wherein said container comprises a charge/discharge circuit of the terminal batteries.

17. Dispensing device according to any one of claims from 3 to 16, wherein each compartment comprises at least one sensor for indicating the presence and/or correct

sensor for indicating the presence and/or correct arrangement of the terminal into the compartment.

18. Dispensing device according to any one of the previous claims, wherein said container comprises means for printing

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tickets and/or information and/or marketing promotion coupons and/or discount vouchers.

- 19. Integrated system for the automatic dispensing of portable terminals for acquiring product data in a shopping centre, characterised in that it comprises:
- at least one dispensing device of portable terminals for acquiring product data in a shopping centre;
- a control station of said at least one terminal dispensing device;
- 10 a connection network between said at least one terminal dispensing device and said control station so as to allow the exchange of information between them.
 - 20. System according to claim 19, wherein said at least one terminal dispensing device is a dispensing device according to any one of claims from 1 to 18.
 - 21. System according to alaim 19 $\frac{1}{1000}$ wherein said control station is in remote position with respect to said at least one terminal dispensing device.
- 22. System according to claim 21, wherein said connection network is a wireless local network.
 - 23. System according to claim 21, wherein said connection network is a geographic network.
 - 24. Integrated system for selling products in a shopping centre through the use of portable terminals, characterised in that it comprises:

cla, an integrated system for dispensing terminals according to any one of claims from 19 to 23;

- means for downloading the products data acquired through the terminals;
- 30 means for computing, as a function of the acquired data, an amount to be paid.
 - 25. System according to claim 24, wherein said means for downloading the product data acquired through the terminals

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San β^{*} Tare housed in the terminal dispensing device.

 2δ . System according to claim 24, wherein said means for downloading the product data acquired through the terminals are provided in remote position with respect to the terminal dispensing device.

· claim 24

27. System according to any one of claims from 24 to 26, further comprising at least one cash register for the payment of said amount.

claim 24 28. System adcording to any one of claims from 24 to 27, further comprising means for charging the amount to be paid

directly on the customer's bank account.

claim 24 29. System according to any one of claims from 24 to 28, wherein at least à portion of the terminals used for acquiring the product data is dispensed to the customers for personal use.

claim 24

30. System according to Any one of claims from 24 to 28, wherein at least a portion of the terminals used for acquiring the product data belongs to the customers.

claim 29 31. System according to any one of claims 29 or 30, further comprising means for allowing the automatic identification of the customers through said terminals.

claim 29 32. System according to any one of claims from 29 to 31, wherein said at least one portion of \terminals is arranged for exchanging information with the cd ntrol unit through a wireless connection network.

claim 29 a 33. System according to any one of claims from 29 to 32, wherein said at least one portion of terminals is arranged receiving visual and/or voice marketing promotional information and/or discount vouchers.

claim 28 34. System according to claims 28 and 29, wherein said means for charging the amount to be paid direct\forally on the customer's bank account is controlled through a texminal of

Said at least one portion of terminals.

- 35. Integrated system for the sales of products in a shopping centre through the use of portable terminals belonging to the customers, characterised in that it comprises:
- means for identifying the customers of a shopping centre through the identification of respective terminals belonging to them, said terminals being adapted to acquire the product data on sale at said shopping centre;
- 10 means for downloading the product data acquired through the identified terminals;
 - means for computing, as a function of the acquired data, an amount to be paid.

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